



## COCHISE COUNTY

# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

"Public Programs...Personal Service"

## MEMORANDUM

Date: February 4, 2016

To: Pam Hudgins, Right-of-Way Agent I

From: Karen L. Lamberton, AICP, County Transportation Planner

Subject: Proposed Abandonment of dedicated ROW on N. Camino Pinon/Parcel 408-20-277-280

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The applicant has requested abandonment of a roadway right-of-way placed in 1903 as part of the Pirtleville townsite, located northwest of the City of Douglas. N. Camino Pinon is designated as an urban local roadway. The portion of N. Camino Pinon south of E. Palm Ave is County-Maintained; the portion between W. Palm Ave. and W. Ash Ave. is a primitive, native-surfaced roadway. Although public rights of way exist, the portion subject to this abandonment request is not improved or county-maintained at this time. This assessment was completed in December 2014 when this application was first submitted.

Two major roadwork chip-seal projects were conducted in the Pirtleville area: the first in 1982 and the second in 1994. The majority of the dedicated roadways in this area were first declared as County highways by the Board of Supervisors and then improved to chip-sealed surfaces. At the completion of the 1994 work all but four segments of the original traffic circulation network in the area were declared and improved. The four remaining segments are: N. Camino Pinon, N. Cleveland St. and N. McKinley St. between W. Palm Ave. totaling approximately 900 feet and W. Ash Ave.; and W. Ash Ave. between N. Cleveland St. and N. Camino Pinon totaling approximately 1,300 feet. These missing links total approximately 2,200 feet.

At the time of the roadway declarations, prior to the roadway improvements being completed, the parcels served by these roadways were not yet built out. Staff at that time (1982 and 1994) only presented to the Board of Supervisors those roadway segments that served existing residential development. Since that time approximately 10 new residential units have been constructed that take access off of one or more of the missing link roadways.

As part of the overall street improvements the County also analyzed the drainage conditions of the Pirtleville area. The lack of a developed storm drainage system as well as the fact that the parcels were located in a natural drainage caused frequent flooding to developed properties. In 1991 the County undertook the construction of a series of shallow swales and reshaping of intersections to re-route storm runoff through different points on the perimeter of the townsite. This re-routing used natural topography as much as possible but reconstructed, with the use of swales, drainage flows to reroute throughout the Pirtleville area along existing roadways, down existing alleyways and on existing dedicated right-of-ways.

Since that time, intermittent maintenance and reshaping activities continue to occur to manage floodwater flow through the Pirtleville area.

A site visit to the proposed abandonment area noted that all routes on these missing links were 1) traversable by an average vehicle; 2) were apparently under current use by a few motor vehicles; 3) alleyways are in use for both access to back gates to lots and as an utility corridor and 4) unauthorized dirt barricades within the dedicated right-of-way were causing vehicles/trucks to either go over the dirt piles or around them, possibly into private property, in order to use the dirt routes.

The current owner of parcels located on both sides of the unimproved N. Camino Pinon now wishes to abandon that portion of the roadway easement located between his two parcels. The continuity of the roadway network is broken in one other place in this townsite – the parcels that serve the neighborhood school. This proposed abandonment would create another permanent broken link in the traffic network.

**Recommendation:**

We have concerns with abandoning the requested section of dedicated right-of-way. Our strongest objection is the control of drainage mitigation throughout the townsite. As drainage is currently routed throughout the network of dedicated right-of-way this abandonment would reduce the options on this northeast section of Pirtleville. Secondly, it appears that the routes are in use, howbeit infrequently given the primitive condition of the roads. If improved to the standard of all other roadways in this area it is likely that this route would be used for local access to parcels.

Appropriate staff should be advised of the accumulation of trash and debris as well as the unauthorized dirt barricades within the County's dedicated right-of-way and that these be properly disposed of.

Residential development is now in place that was not in existence during the 1994 roadway improvement project and it may be now appropriate to complete the chip-sealing of this entire roadway network. It may be appropriate to evaluate the need for connecting these four missing links into the improved (chip-sealed) traffic circulation network for Pirtleville.

We recommend that the appropriate staff evaluate the need for this one segment of N. Camino Pinon for its desirability and usefulness for conveying stormwater throughout the townsite. If stormwater can be adequately re-routed and it would not harm the long-standing system for addressing previous flooding in this area then an abandonment of this segment, while breaking up the neighborhood gird traffic circulation, would not be detrimental to the Pirtleville area as a whole.

Given the background on the N. Camino Pinon segment subject to this request it appears to be premature at this time to support abandonment. The County's 2040 long-range transportation plan, recommends the identification and completion of missing links in the transportation network, such as these four links. Additional consideration of the implications for drainage and future connectivity within the Pirtleville area would be suggested as part of the assessment of this proposed abandonment. However, this memo reflects technical traffic circulation and potential drainage concerns only and it is acknowledged that there are other factors under consideration that may find this requested abandonment to be an appropriate action to undertake at this time.